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out. But this morning, to try to pull this bill, is not the right formula and I would ask the body not to do that this morning. Senator Beutler said he was willing to pull it after he talks about it. I would hope he would follow through on that commitment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Schellpeper. Chair recognizes Senator Schrock on the motion by Senator Beutler.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, most of you know I'm a farmer and do I like the fertilizer tax? No, I don't like the fertilizer tax, but the present tax we have is due to run out December 31st the year 2000. That's a little over 22 months from now. But I think the overriding issue is that I think the ag community needs to step forward and take responsibility for helping keep our groundwater clean, and probably the most direct way of doing that is by taxing the product that has caused the most trouble when it comes to keeping our water clean and keeping our nitrates in order, and that is fertilizer. So I think the present form of tax we had was...was a fair tax. I will not disagree with Senator Schellpeper, it was not a very liked tax, but I think it was appropriate. Senator Schellpeper has brought up the fact that, well, people in the city fertilizer their yards and half of it goes in the gutter and half of it goes on the sidewalk, and that may or may not be true, but I think the overriding concern is the volume of fertilizer that farmers use. And I would tell you that the people who buy fertilizer for their lawns pay a sales tax. Farmers do not pay a sales tax on their fertilizer. This amounts to a \$2.5 million per year shortfall for the NRDs, and that is a big concern of mine, because I don't believe that the mission of the NRDs has diminished and I don't think the issue of clean water in this state has been resolved. And so I will rely on the Revenue Committee to come up with some sort of solution. Hopefully, it's a solution that we can...can all support. I'm not saying it's necessarily going to be popular, but some of the times you have to step up to the plate and take responsibility for the activities that you're doing and the ramifications they have on the waters of the state. And there is a direct collection...direct connection between fertilizer application in this state and the nitrates in the water in this state. And if you believe, as I do, that the missions of the